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tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so a supplicant coming to the *Bɔyar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔyar* in the Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence, children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔyar* must avoid all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have independent External *Bɔya*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of the same External *Bɔyar* congregation. This means that the clans and lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation, or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife, though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another, among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔyar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It emphasizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔyar* or the coercion of an adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult to which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External *Bɔyar* can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛyər*) of an individual. An ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist (*ɔn m-mar n-gɔvɔr ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛyəraan*) must keep the totemic avoidances of the *Bɔyar* community. This applies particularly to non-Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims to the *Bɔyar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born, as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis themselves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards of the *Bɔyar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

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other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider community of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are significant. In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔyar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔyar*.

The External *Bɔyar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔyar*, parallel to the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, each External *Bɔyar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔyar* maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Talaŋ (*u pana baŋ Talaŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Talaŋ has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child'; now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider community.

The *Bɔyar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔyar*, and often invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical, anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔyar* symbolizes the ritual value of the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

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aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔyar* cult binds the individual by the most solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order bequeathed to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

That this is so can be seen from the fact that the most solemn oath of the Hill Talis is the oath by the External *Bɔyar*—'(By) my Ancestor Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet flour water (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidden to use late-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔyar*. The climax of the initiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novices at the *Bɔyar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when he is initiated. The *Bɔyar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going into the *Bɔyar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial) fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔyar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔyar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔyar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔyar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔyar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔyar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔyar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔyar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔyar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

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tion for her remains. He still helps her to cultivate her ground-nut plot, if he has no younger brothers to take this on, and assists her in other ways. Later on, when he marries, his intimacy with his mother will be revived. It is to her *dug* that he brings his wife and in her care that he places the girl.

A girl grows away from her father as she approaches puberty. This is not due to physiological taboos, for there are none connected with a girl's puberty or with menstruation in general. There are no ceremonies to mark a girl's attainment of physiological maturity, nor is there any break in her affective relations with her parents. The only significant break in the steady process of social maturation for a girl is her first marriage. Her growing away from her father is due to the sexual division of labour and the corresponding division of interests in the family. Though there is no barrier to ordinary social intercourse between the sexes in a domestic family, there is the separation of interests and activities that we have mentioned before, and adolescent boys and girls are caught up in it.

A girl of 13 or 14 years and over does not run to her father and cuddle up to him as her 6- or 7-year-old sister might do. She is with her mother and the other women most of the day assisting with the more arduous domestic tasks. She helps to clean the house, to fetch water and collect shea fruit or firewood, to grind the millet, to cook, and to care for the younger children. At harvest time, or when they are beating the floors of their rooms, she does a full day's work with the other women. She is already adept in all these feminine skills and is well versed in all the gossip of the women. A girl of 12 or 13 can be left in charge of the house for a day or two while her mother is away. She goes to market by herself to buy or sell things for her mother; and also, a more important consideration for her personally, to display her charms and flirt with the young men. She accompanies older girls on firewood parties or when they go to dance at funerals.

When a girl approaches puberty her mind is set upon marriage. Tallensi estimate a girl's stage of development before marriage by the appearance of her breasts. Leaving aside betrothal of a girl in childhood, which does not require her consent, a girl is not considered to be mature enough for serious courtship until her breasts are formed (*u biiha n-yi*). She is then called a maiden (*pɔɣasarət*). Before that stage, when her breasts are budding (*u biiha m-pukət*), suitors may already be coming to her or soliciting her parents. A girl may be married before she menstruates (*lu sie*), though it is not considered seemly for her husband to sleep with her until she is capable of child-bearing. When her suitors come to her, probably the only person who knows which of them she likes best is her mother; and if she and her lover decide to elope her mother may help them. As we know, the bonds of affection between mother and daughter remain as strong as ever after the latter's marriage

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into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably interrelated. In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend of physiological and psychological development and that of social and cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of which social development lags behind psycho-physical development. A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physiological development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social development is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls, which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

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827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are *expected* to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic, interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister, brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path to her calling out *mma*, *mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids. A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

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based upon a profound antagonism. Second, the rites evidently recreate and regenerate the religious, the magical, and the traditional bulwarks of the social life of the Namoos.

A week later the scene shifts to the Hill Tallis. On the first day of the following moon, Bɔɣaraam ŋmarig, the Tallis begin their harvest festival of the same name. Despite the difference of name, it is the Daa festival translated into the peculiar and esoteric ritual idiom of the Hill Tallis. Namoos and Tallis, as the exclusion of the former from the inner mysteries at Baari indicated, constitute two religious sects. The cult of the bɔɣar, after which the Hill Tallis name their festival, dominates the religion of all the Tallis, but is known to the Namoos only by hearsay. Its hypertrophied development among the Hill Tallis is indeed completely hidden from their own sect-brethren at Baari and Gbizug. A bɔɣar may be a grove of trees, a cave in the hillside, or a small natural enclosure made by trees and boulders. It is truly sacred, for it may be entered only for ritual purposes, and in the company of all the ritual officiants. A bɔɣar's communicants generally comprise a group of linked lineages or of several clans, each of which appoints one officiant. All the ritual of the bɔɣar cult is built up on the notion of sacrifice, and every officiant or his representative must be present at every sacrifice. It is an axiom that a quarrel or dispute between communicants must be healed at once, by rites of reconciliation at the bɔɣar. The bɔɣar is the pinnacle of their ancestor cult, for it is there that all the ancestors of the communicants reside. It has tremendous magical power, amoral, like all Tale magic, and therefore applicable both for beneficient and maleficent ends. Thus its potency as fertility magic is widely renowned, and it can be invoked to bring death and destruction upon an enemy, by its communicants.

This, and much more, I learnt with very great difficulty, only after I had been initiated. For many months my enquires were fruitless. The Namoos know the dates of Bɔɣaraam, and the dances. Of the rituals they had, despite centuries of intimate contact, absolutely no knowledge. Indeed they refuse to hear of it, for they regard the cults of the Tallis with fear and aversion. The Tallis, on the other hand, never ceased to warn me against betraying what I had seen to my Namoos friends. It is, for them, the sin against the Holy Ghost punishable by instantaneous death, inflicted by the bɔɣar. This, the most absolute cleavage between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis, depends upon the fact that the latter initiate their sons into their cult. Nothing corresponding to initiation exists among the Namoos or even Gbizug or Baari. The Bɔɣaraam ritual is at the same time communion, initiation, and offering of first fruits.

The various bɔɣar congregations commence the ritual of Bɔɣaraam on

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796 successive days, starting from the first day of the moon. The order of entry is fixed by tradition, and claims to precedence in rank are based in part on this. But preliminary sacrifices, consultations of diviners, collection of the chickens and guinea fowls which will be required, and finally ritual preparation of beer, usher in the festival. From the "Moon of Waters" on, every head of a joint family must eat out of special vessels, lest his food or water be contaminated by the newly harvested guinea corn flour, ground beans, or ocra. None of these foods are prohibited to women and younger members of the family. The taboo depends not upon some notions of the magical danger of eating unconsecrated first fruits, but upon the relationship of the communicants to the bɔγar, who has the prerogative of tasting them first.

796 I can not describe the esoteric rites of Bɔγaraam in detail. The main
●881 events take place during one night and the next day. The initiand youths, selected simply by the fact that their fathers can afford the numerous fowls and guinea fowls and the beer necessary for the rites, are pounced upon at night, undressed, and segregated throughout the rites. The communicants wear skins, the ritual garb of the Tallis. Women and uninitiated boys are rigorously excluded from earshot. Each elder brings fowls, guinea fowls, guinea corn flour, and cooked ground beans, and sacrifices are made in great numbers both at the houses of the Tendaanas and inside the bɔγar. The ancestors are called upon and the bɔγar is invoked. "Your day has come round again. We are about to eat the new guinea corn. Hence we bring you this offering of guinea corn and beans and these, your bɔγaraam chickens. Grant us untroubled sleeping. May our wives bear children, and may we sow early millet successfully and meet again next year." This is the theme of the sacrificial invocations. Every chicken thus slaughtered is observed with concentrated anxiety. It must come to rest on its back, else the doner has sinned in some way and must at once go to a diviner to discover how. For the initiands long life, success in marriage and in farming, and safety from enemies is begged. It is a very serious thing if an initiand's fowl is rejected by the ancestors; and all proceedings are suspended until the sin is traced and atonement made.

The ritual is sensationally dramatic, and entirely different in style and emphasis from Namoos ritual. There is a constant interweaving of the three motifs, of communion, initiation, and first fruit offerings. The tone fluctuates between intense and almost terrified ritual participation and casual conviviality, when the beer is being divided.

The bɔγar is first entered mysteriously in pitch darkness; but the "high spot" is what might be called the administration of the sacrament to the

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initiands next day. They have been treated throughout with veiled contumely, like infants and outcasts, seated on the bare ground, their backs to the ceremonial. When the sacrifices are over and the beer consumed, the initiands are brusquely dragged up, each in turn, to the altar of the bɔɣar. Kneeling before it, quivering with fear, his eyes blindfolded by the hands of one officiant, his hands clasping a chicken whose neck he saws off on a rough stone with the help of another officiant, he is made to swear repeatedly "If I tell anybody may I die." This then is the secret of the impregnability of the Tallis bɔɣar cult both to the Namoos and to the ethnologist.

Before they leave, the meat and flour of all the sacrifices are divided out according to strict rules of prerogative; the initiands being fed with a tiny piece of meat and flour dumpling each. The rôle of each participant kinship group is defined in terms of the officiant it elects, the contributions it makes to the sacrifices, and the share of meat, beer, and flour it receives. The natives stress this organizational balance more jealously than details of ritual; for it is the structural framework which preserves the ritual collaboration. Finally, all the communicants, including those newly initiated, are daubed on brows, arms, and knees with consecrated red mud, the concrete emblem of the beneficient magic they are carrying home.

Bɔɣaraam, like Daa, is the occasion when married daughters return home with gifts of food and guinea fowls from their husbands, and men who have migrated to distant parts try to return for the ceremonies. Dancing follows after the ritual day. But as each settlement dances by itself, the Bɔɣaraam dancing is neither so impressive nor so great a focus of social interest as Gingauŋ. This time the Namoos are onlookers, for they may not enter the Tallis dances.

The Bɔɣaraam festival of the Hill Tallis thus appears to be homologous with the Gingauŋ and Daa of the Namoos, and the Daa of Baari, in its calendrical reference and its functional context. For Chief, Tendaanas, and elders, the fathers of the community who bear the greatest burden of responsibility for its welfare, the ritual is the dominant theme. For those of lesser social responsibility, the dancing and festivity, the fellowship of jubilation, are of major value. For everybody, these are festivals of reunion in which family and wider agnatic connections, the unique fact for the individual of having been born into a certain family and clan, receive special emphasis.

But what must chiefly interest us, in this paper, is to observe how these festivals differentiate and bind the Namoos and the Tallis. On the one hand it seems as if each community consolidates itself socially and morally by the very act of repulsing its neighbor. Behind its stone wall of exclusiveness,